

TREDGOLD'S MENTAL RETARDATION. By Michael Craft. 12th Edition. (Pp xiv + 384, Figs 35. £16.00). London: Balliere Tindall, 1979.

THE twelfth edition of Tredgold's Mental Retardation reflects the increased knowledge of the causation of mental handicap and the changing concepts in the treatment, care and training of such individuals. Where previously this book was mainly medical in authorship, it has now, in its twelfth edition, become multidisciplinary in presentation, and emphasises the greater involvement in the care of the mentally handicapped of professionals other than medical practitioners. With such a diverse body of professionals it is natural that each will put forward their own particular point of view and ride their own particular hobby-horse. This is not altogether a bad thing except that in some sections the point of view of a particular discipline is difficult to comprehend because of the terminology or jargon employed, and where other points of view are not considered or expressed.

The Clinical section of the book is by necessity presented in a condensed form but has many excellent illustrations of clinical types. There is, however, an annoying tendency to keep referring the reader to other chapters or pages where the subject mentioned is more fully discussed. There are some chapters in the Clinical section which could usefully be revised or omitted in subsequent editions.

The editor rightly points out that the contributors to this book come from three continents and the ideas expressed are internationally valid. There will however be a tendency for readers to select only those chapters which are relevant to his own particular scene, although he might have a passing interest of the practice in other countries. However, I found it heavy going in, for example, understanding and appreciating the North American View and the emerging constitutional issues there.

This is a useful book for the person interested in mental retardation and particularly for trainee psychiatrists. It gives a comprehensive picture of the whole field of mental retardation and the current philosophy of care, treatment and training by the multidisciplinary team approach. B.G.S.

LIVER BIOPSY INTERPRETATION. By Peter J. Scheuer. Third Edition. (Pp 260, Figs 160 b/w and 29 colour plates. £19.50). London: Baillière Tindall, 1980.

THIS monograph is a valuable guide in the organisation and interpretation of liver biopsy specimens. The earlier editions have already established its use to both clinicians and pathologists, and Professor Scheuer continues to retain the format of the book with chapters on technical procedures, the normal liver and interpretation of pathological changes in various liver disorders with special emphasis on the problems of biopsy material.

The third edition has been expanded and the illustrations, both colour and black and white, are now placed adjoining the text allowing for easier consultation. The high quality of the illustrations is maintained and the additional figures are informative. A new chapter on liver disease in the alcoholic is introduced and many of the other chapters have been revised to allow incorporation of recent advances in liver disease. The chapter on biliary disease includes a section on cholestasis, and that on malformations and neoplasms includes liver cell nodules and their relationship to oral contraceptives. The more recently introduced histochemical procedures of use in diagnosis are included in the relevant chapters.

The author's aim in providing a book for practising pathologists interpreting liver biopsy specimens continues to be fully realised, and the third edition is to be widely welcomed as a most useful monograph in this field. D.H.